

Homeland Security, Housing Secretaries to Assess Rebuilding Efforts
March 4, 2009

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Tomorrow, U.S. Rep. Charlie Melancon (LA-03) will join Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano and Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan on their tour of New Orleans to assess the region's hurricane recovery progress.

"To really understand the challenges in rebuilding the south Louisiana, you need to see it with your own eyes and hear directly from the people on the ground," said Rep. Melancon.

"I am encouraged that, only a few weeks into their new jobs, Secretary Napolitano and Secretary Donovan are already getting their feet wet. Their visit demonstrates President Obama's commitment to rebuilding the Gulf Coast and I am honored to be part of it."

Much of Louisiana's Third Congressional District suffered severe damage during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. St. Bernard Parish in suburban New Orleans was almost entirely flooded when the levee system failed. While great progress has been made, the recovery is far from over.

To keep south Louisiana's hurricane recovery a national priority, for the past three years Rep. Melancon has partnered with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, and Majority Whip and Chair of the Katrina Task Force James Clyburn to bring a Congressional delegation to the Gulf Coast. Every summer since the storms, 20-25 members of Congress have traveled to south Louisiana for several days to view the progress that has been made and learn how Congress can better help the region fully recover. While in Louisiana, these Representatives from states across the country tour our levee projects, schools, sheriff's offices, health care clinics, and the homes of people still rebuilding.

Photos from the August 2008 Congressional delegation trip are available for publication. All photos credited to Steve Rusnak.

Speaker Pelosi and Rep. Melancon listen as a representative from the LSU Community Health Clinic in New Orleans East talks about the challenges in rebuilding: http://www.melancon.house.gov/images/stories/Photo_Gallery/july2008/lsu5bossspeaker.jpg

Rep. Melancon comments on the progress made in rebuilding Karen Vinsinau's home in Chalmette since the groups visit the year before: http://www.melancon.house.gov/images/stories/Photo_Gallery/july2008/karen6groupnboss.jpg
(left to right, Whip Clyburn, Rep. Melancon, Leader Hoyer, Karen Vinsinau, Speaker Pelosi)

Rep. Melancon and other members of Congress listen as a St. Bernard resident describes the challenges he has faced in rebuilding his home. His house is one of hundreds in the parish being rebuilt by the St. Bernard Project. http://www.melancon.house.gov/images/stories/Photo_Gallery/july2008/william%26sharonansardi2.jpg

Members of delegation listen as representatives from the Army Corps at the

Harvey Canal:
http://www.melancon.house.gov/images/stories/Photo_Gallery/july2008/harvey1s.jpg

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